

Reasons for Allowance

EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT

1. An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it MUST be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

Authorization for this examiner's amendment was given in a telephone interview with Steve Catlin on 1/14/2010.

The application has been amended as follows:

Claim 1 has been amended as follows:

A method of producing a ceramic porous body having partition walls, the ceramic porous body comprising cordierite, the method comprising:

adding a porous silica powder having a bulk density of 0.2 to 1 g/cm³ or a porous silica-containing compound powder having a bulk density of 0.2 to 1 g/cm³ to a forming raw material to prepare a ceramic clay, in an amount of 5 to 40 vol. % in the total amount of the forming raw material so as to make the porous silica powder or the porous silica-containing compound powder work sufficiently as a pore-forming material and as at least a part of an Si-source for forming a cordierite in the ceramic clay,

forming the resulting ceramic clay into a specific shape, and

firing the formed ceramic clay so as to convert a material of the ceramic clay to cordierite

wherein the partition walls have pores and porosity of at least 50%, said pores being formed mainly by virtue of the porous silica powder or the porous silica-containing compound powder

wherein the porous silica powder is a silica gel and the porous silica-containing compound powder is a magnesium silicate.

Claim 2 is amended as follows:

The phrase "and reacted with other components of the forming raw material to form a silica containing compound" is deleted from the claim.

Claim 4 has been cancelled.

Claim 9 has been amended as follows:

The preamble has been changed to read, "The method according to claim 1, ~~further comprising wherein the adding step includes:~~"

Claim 22 has been amended to read:

The method according to claim 1, wherein ~~the porous silica powder is a silica gel having a porosity of 95 to 99.99 mole% and the porous silica containing compound powder is magnesium silicate-Si accounts for 95 to 99.99 mol% of the total metal elements of the silica gel.~~

Allowable Subject Matter

1. The following is a statement of reasons for the indication of allowable subject matter: The subject matter of these claims explicitly indicate the silica and silica containing compounds useful in the method of the invention. Specifically these are highly porous silica gel and a porous magnesium silicate. The use of these specific compounds in the creation of a highly porous cordierite body by the claimed method can not be anticipated or found obvious over the prior art. The prior art typically makes use

of non-porous silica and non-porous talc, as silica containing compounds. Examples of the use of porous silica and silica containing compounds in the creation of cordierite bodies are sparse and could not be found in the relevant amounts claimed in claim 1, ie 40 vol%. Since the compounds are extremely porous, this represents a relatively low wt% of the porous component. Thereafter, the claimed subject matter is neither anticipated nor is it obvious over the prior art.

2. Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Matthew E. Hoban whose telephone number is (571) 270-3585. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday - Friday from 7:30 AM to 5 PM EST.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Jerry Lorengo can be reached on (571) 272-1233. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/Matthew E Hoban/
Examiner, Art Unit 1793

/C. Melissa Koslow/
Primary Examiner, Art Unit 1793